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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

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Finland

[Original: English]

[3 March 1993]

1. The report of the Secretary-General entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold war era" (A/C.1/47/7 of 23 October 1992) is a very important and timely document on international security and the United Nations role in arms control and disarmament. Finland agrees with the thrust of the observations in the report of the Secretary-General.

2. The dramatic shifts in political and strategic landscape have challenged the judgements and assumptions on which many countries' foreign and security policies were based. The global political and military tension has decreased. But the cold war has been replaced by other sources of national or international insecurity. This has had a direct impact on the discussion of global security in the United Nations.

3. Finland as a State Member of the United Nations is ready for active political dialogue and effective action to revitalize cooperation on global security through the world Organization. The process of disarmament and arms control has already been accelerated by the end of the cold war. Important arms control achievements have been recorded during the past years. This process can be developed on the basis of the existing provisions of the United Nations Charter and by strengthening the current practices and methods.

4. The General Assembly and its First Committee are the main multilateral forum for the consideration of all disarmament and arms control issues. The First Committee has undergone a process of reform in recent years which has increased its effectiveness. There have been fewer resolutions and a greater proportion of them have been adopted by consensus. The merger of the general debate on disarmament and security issues in the First Committee has been a positive move. Finland supports reform of the First Committee agenda to avoid overlapping of items.

5. It is important to integrate disarmament and arms regulation issues into the broader structure of the international peace and security agenda. The concepts of integration, globalization and revitalization are useful tools when one aims at enhanced efforts in the field of disarmament and arms control. Now these concepts should be transferred to operational levels.

6. This can be assisted by continuing the process that began by the merger of the general debate on disarmament and security issues. Questions like effects of atomic radiation, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, science and peace, security of small States and even the question of peace-keeping operations in all their aspects could also be discussed under the general theme of international security in the First Committee.

7. The benefits of increased transparency and openness are obvious. The establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms opens up new prospects which we should try to utilize. The relevant forums should consider new possibilities to strengthen transparency through measures of confidence-building.

8. The extensive lesson of commitments within regional cooperation in the European context is that the assets far exceed the liabilities for all those who are participating in this cooperation. A broad understanding of security has also been important for confidence-building within the process of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

9. Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as of conventional armaments, will be a major concern of the international community during the coming years. Growing proliferation risks call for rigorous implementation of the relevant international instruments.

10. There is also a need to integrate discussion of the new dimensions of disarmament with other major preoccupations of the international community. The relation between disarmament and development is influenced by the levels of military and social spending in recipient countries. Military technology can be used to support protection of the environment. Military conflicts have pointed out the need to relate disarmament efforts to implementation of international humanitarian law.

11. The Conference on Disarmament has served as a multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Its role as the single negotiating forum of global character should be maintained. It proved its value only recently in the elaboration and completion of the chemical weapons convention. With the completion of this important treaty, a new phase has started in the work of the Conference.

12. The agenda of the Conference on Disarmament should be focused and compact. Finland has welcomed the decision to concentrate this year on the four items, nuclear test ban, prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and transparency in armaments, which have been seen as priorities. This approach could serve as a model also for the future. Finland shares the Secretary-General's view that the Conference on Disarmament should focus its efforts on well-defined and urgent issues.

13. The Conference on Disarmament would benefit greatly from an expansion of its membership. Many of the new concerns call for wider participation of the international community. All those who apply for membership and are willing to contribute to its work should be eligible to join the Conference. The composition could be reviewed at some intervals, for instance every five years. It would be useful to complement this with the possibility to participate in the work of the Conference as an observer also in the future. In our opinion, an issue-oriented Conference on Disarmament, without any artificial balance calculations, would best serve the interests of everyone.

14. Finland takes this opportunity to reiterate its interest in becoming a member as soon as possible. Finland submitted its formal application to the Conference on Disarmament as early as 1982. We trust that it will now be possible to respond favourably to this application.

15. The Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat will, in the light of globalization of arms control and disarmament, face increasing tasks. Therefore the Office should be given adequate resources to fulfil all its tasks.

16. Disarmament should be seen in a wider context of international peace and security. Crisis management, peacemaking and peace-keeping have gained new momentum. The United Nations should adjust its mechanisms to this reality.

Indonesia

[Original: English]

[26 February 1993]

1. The Secretary-General's report entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7) made an important contribution to enhancing public awareness of the dangers of the arms race in the post-cold-war period and the imperative need to bring it under control. The report enumerates a number of specific measures for both old and new problems in disarmament with far-reaching ramifications. It points to new directions to deal with new kinds of threats to security.

2. Security problems are region-specific and are best addressed within a regional context. Such endeavours have highlighted, inter alia, the validity of confidence-building measures, particularly in regions of high tension, security at lower levels of armaments and elimination of destabilizing military capabilities and imbalances. In this context, the holding of regional dialogues, where appropriate, to provide a viable framework for endeavours to promote security and other commonly agreed objectives warrants serious consideration. Such an approach, based on geopolitical, historical, cultural and other factors, can lead to channels of communication between adversaries and promote confidence-building measures which could facilitate the initiation of arms reduction talks in some regions. Global, regional and subregional approaches to disarmament complement each other and should be pursued simultaneously to promote regional and international peace and security. What is called for is a comprehensive approach to the wide-ranging disarmament questions through sustained negotiations, particularly within the framework of regional organizations and the United Nations.

3. Questions relating to various aspects of nuclear armaments have always comprised much of the First Committee's deliberations. The Committee's focus should remain the priority issue of nuclear disarmament.

4. Indonesia calls for continuing efforts to facilitate a more rational and focused discussion of and action on the issues, inter alia through a rearrangement of the agenda of the First Committee. Such efforts should aim at greater organizational clarity and coherence without prejudging the substance of the issues or infringing upon the right of Members to bring any relevant items before the Committee. Furthermore, improvements or changes in the conduct of its business should not be at the expense of the interests or concerns of Member States. In this context, it may be useful to consider the establishment of a small ad hoc working group which could include some of the previous Chairmen and Bureau members of the Committee, to try to identify further rationalization measures for approval and adoption by the Committee.

5. The Disarmament Commission has demonstrated its utility by seeking to identify, elaborate and propose various measures for subsequent negotiations in the appropriate forums. The continuing and unique role of the Commission as an essential component of the United Nations in the field of disarmament should be acknowledged.

6. Multilateral negotiations on nuclear issues have long been overdue. All Member States have a vital interest in nuclear disarmament. Because of the limited scope and the number of parties, bilateral endeavours can never replace the multilateral search for nuclear disarmament measures. The breakthroughs achieved recently in strategic armaments involving the two major Powers can be translated into meaningful progress in the multilateral context through the agreed mechanism of the Conference on Disarmament. It should, however, be acknowledged that the number of warheads to be eliminated under START II by the year 2003 would remain essentially the same as the two major Powers possessed during the 1970s at the height of the cold war. In the context of review conferences such as those for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other modalities, it would be inappropriate to entrust to this forum, which is a negotiating body, a supervisory role over some existing disarmament agreements.

7. The outcome of the four review conferences held so far do not warrant either an unconditional or an indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Worse still, such an action would pre-empt or prejudge the outcome of the preparatory sessions and infringe upon the decision-making powers of the review conference to be held in 1995. The removal of inequities and asymmetries will be essential prerequisites to upgrade and update the Treaty. If the needed changes are not in place by then, the Treaty should be extended only for a short period. There should be a longer extension only after the depository States have fulfilled the solemn obligations undertaken by them.

8. With regard to a role for the Security Council in disarmament matters, it is important to ensure that this august body conforms to its mandate as defined in the Charter of the United Nations, so that there is no encroachment on the jurisdiction and prerogatives of the General Assembly concerning the formulation of principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments.

9. International security and stability would be greatly enhanced by increased openness and transparency in the military field. Such an approach calls for the availability of adequate information concerning armaments and armed forces. The sharing of military data on a regular basis along with agreed criteria for their definition and comparison would make a significant contribution to dispel mistrust and suspicion and thereby facilitate more open policies in the military area. They will also constitute the first initial steps towards applying a wide range of confidence-building measures, including an international consensus on the regulation of arms transfers. The register for such transfers should be universal and non-discriminatory and implemented in such a way as to facilitate input from all States. However, meaningful progress cannot be made unless the pervasive role of the arms industry and the military establishment as well as of the producers and suppliers is taken into account.

10. In focusing attention on the conventional arms race in a regional context, the report of the Secretary-General glossed over the futile efforts that are being made on nuclear and related issues, in particular, a comprehensive test ban. Contrived obstacles to these endeavours have long been self-evident not only in the Conference on Disarmament but also in the Amendment Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water. Such a policy is incompatible with the generally proclaimed objective of establishing a truly new world order. While recognizing the urgent need to curb the development and excessive build-up of conventional and all other kinds of armaments, we deem it essential that such efforts should be placed within a comprehensive context, should focus on both supplier and recipient countries and should be directed towards the primary causes of the conventional arms race.

11. Neither can Indonesia accept the contention that conventional armaments, per se, are as great a threat to the survival of mankind as nuclear weapons, and that conventional armaments in the hands of third world countries in some way pose a greater threat to peace and security than the nuclear and conventional weapons possessed by the great Powers. If we are to make progress on this important issue, it is essential to return to the fundamental framework and priorities contained in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2), the first special session devoted to disarmament.

12. Parallel with these efforts, our attention should also focus on enhancing the role of the United Nations in becoming the repository of objective data, primarily through the collection, compilation and dissemination of information on military matters. In the context of the emerging trend towards greater openness and transparency in the military field, the establishment of a satellite communications system under the auspices of the United Nations would be particularly useful to compile data on armed forces and armament production, military research and development, arms transfers and foreign military aid - all of which would make a significant contribution to an understanding of the state of armaments and armed forces, remove apprehension,

and ultimately facilitate the process of concrete disarmament agreements on global, regional and subregional levels.

13. Indonesia agrees with the view that confidence-building measures are an essential component of a viable system of collective security. Their introduction in different regions of the world would be both timely and appropriate. These measures include, inter alia, transparency in military arrangements, restructuring of forces towards more defensive postures to help reduce military tensions, an agreed ceiling on military forces of external Powers through exchange of data, and reduction in the number of military exercises while allowing representatives of other countries to be present as observers.

14. Finally, nuclear and conventional disarmament efforts must necessarily be regarded as complementary aspects of the common objective of general and complete disarmament. Such a process must necessarily begin with the nuclear Powers and other militarily significant States. It is a truism that in general the vast majority of developing nations possess only the minimal capability and/or means for self-defence. The crux of the problem then is to agree on modalities to ensure the security of all States at progressively lower levels of conventional armaments and with the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This would necessitate the mutual regulation, limitation and reduction of armaments as well as the implementation of the collective security provisions envisioned in the Charter.

15. The international community has now a unique opportunity to achieve substantive disarmament measures that reflect the wishes of the vast majority of the Member States. This calls for a fundamental reorientation in our approaches to security and disarmament. Unilateral policies and partial measures may have been adequate in the past but the multidimensional nature of the problems involved calls for a collective approach. The resurgence of the United Nations and the renewed trust in its capacity to act effectively makes it obligatory on the part of Member States to mobilize the necessary political will and to use the Organization more effectively to sustain the disarmament process and to strengthen international peace and security. The convening of a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament at an appropriate time and after adequate preparations is worthy of consideration.

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United States of America

[Original: English]

[8 March 1993]

1. With reference to General Assembly decision 47/422, the United States of America hereby communicates its views on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

2. The United States fully agrees with the basic premise of the report that the current, dramatically changed, international environment offers new opportunities for arms control and also poses new challenges. Over the years, the United States has frequently voiced concern about the discrepancy between the way the question of disarmament was approached by the international community, in particular in United Nations forums, and the evolving international realities. It therefore strongly endorses the Secretary-General's view that a reassessment of that approach is required and hopes his thoughtful report will inspire all Member States to render their arms control and disarmament agenda relevant to the international security problems of the real world of today.

3. The United States has always held that arms control and disarmament are instruments for enhancing national and international security and not an objective per se that can be viewed and pursued in isolation. As stressed by the Secretary-General, the links that exist between arms control and disarmament, on the one hand, and the political processes that shape international behaviour, on the other, are crucial to progress in the field of disarmament and the creation of a new system of international security. The United States fully agrees that the time has come for an integration of arms control and disarmament issues into the broader structure of the international peace and security agenda.

4. The United States notes with appreciation the Secretary-General's assessment of the nuclear-weapon reductions agreed to by the two major nuclear powers. They are indeed absolutely striking in scope. In this connection, it should be noted that the agreement reached last June between the United States and the Russian Federation, which would dramatically reduce their respective strategic nuclear arsenals to 3,500 warheads or below by the year 2003, as well as result in the elimination of all their multiple-warhead land-based missiles, has been formalized and signed as the START II Treaty. It should also be noted that in Europe significant achievements have been made in conventional arms control and arms reductions, as evidenced by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Stockholm Document and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), and that States participating in the CSCE process are engaged in further efforts in pursuit of enhanced stability and security in the CSCE area. These developments demonstrate that the disarmament and political processes are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

5. Against this background, the Secretary-General's call for a globalization of the arms control and disarmament process is particularly timely. The two major nuclear Powers and the countries of what many have called the most heavily armed area in the world have taken the lead. As disarmament is recognized to be the responsibility of all States, each of them should follow that lead and carry out its share of that collective responsibility, not by telling others what to do, but by taking appropriate, practical arms control and disarmament steps themselves. As the Secretary-General points out, the argument advanced by some States that the major military Powers should disarm first is too often used to avoid practical measures.

6. Like the Secretary-General, the United States has observed and is encouraged by a growing interest among States in regional approaches to arms control and confidence-building. Regrettably, however, this interest is not shared by all, and there is also evidence of continued, strenuous opposition to regional disarmament. It is generally acknowledged that measures in the field of disarmament are not transferable from one region to another, as regions differ in terms of their security needs and concerns. Thus, a global disarmament structure could not consist of a single set of measures equally applicable to all. If such a structure is to become a reality, States will have to provide for it building blocks so tailored as to enhance peace and security in their respective regions, while also contributing to international security at large.

7. In this context, as the Secretary-General points out, major attention should be devoted on the regional level to the question of conventional arms races and their destabilizing effects. This problem has long been neglected, and some have even been denying its existence, despite all the evidence of excessive accumulation of conventional arms in many parts of the world. Frequently, responsibility for such accumulation is placed on arms supplier States. While it is true that certain industrialized States now have arms production over-capacity and surplus equipment, it is also true that one cannot feed a market that is not hungry. Consequently, responsibility for imprudent, destabilizing arms transfers should be borne at least equally by the seller and the buyer, especially as it is primarily the buyer who must weigh the impact of arms acquisitions on the resources available for his country's socio-economic development and on stability in the region. The United States believes that the Secretary-General's suggestion for regional agreements as to what constitutes clearly excessive or threatening military capabilities merits serious consideration by the relevant States. For its part, conscious of its share of responsibility as an arms supplier for avoiding destabilizing arms transfers, the United States subjects all proposed arms exports to careful scrutiny and a strict licensing regime. At the United States initiative, talks have also been held among the major arms suppliers with a view to curbing exports of destabilizing arms, with particular focus on the Middle East. The United States stands by ready to support other appropriate efforts to stem destabilizing arms transfers.

8. As regards the Secretary-General's comments on the question of a comprehensive nuclear-test ban, last year a law was enacted in the United States which, inter alia, provides for a moratorium on nuclear testing by the United States through 30 June 1993; limits the number of tests after that date to five per fiscal year until 30 September 1996; and requires that the

Administration report to Congress on a plan for achieving a comprehensive ban on testing by the end of fiscal year 1996. President Clinton has informed Congress that his Administration is currently preparing a review of questions relating to the forum and modalities for negotiating a comprehensive test ban and the related question of resuming a limited programme of United States nuclear testing after 1 July 1993, as provided for under this legislation, and that he will submit the requisite report as soon as this review is complete.

9. As noted by the Secretary-General, the Security Council Summit, which took place in January 1992, declared that the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constituted a threat to international peace and security. That declaration further emphasized the extreme importance of preventing proliferation and the need for supporting the efforts under way in appropriate forums in pursuit of that objective. The United States has supported and will continue to support such efforts with the utmost determination.

10. The Secretary-General's appreciation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as an indispensable framework for global non-proliferation efforts in the nuclear field is fully shared by the United States and, we believe, by a vast majority of other States. The United States strongly endorses the Secretary-General's call on all States to adhere to the Treaty and for its indefinite and unconditional extension in 1995. A positive response to this call of the Secretary-General by all members of the international community would constitute a contribution of undoubtedly historic significance to a safer future for mankind. The United States also agrees with the Secretary-General that the safeguards arrangements for the Treaty should be strengthened and is actively supporting efforts to that end in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

11. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction has now been signed by 138 States, and the Preparatory Commission has begun its work. The provisions banning the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, and the unprecedented extent of the accompanying verification measures, are designed to ensure the elimination of such weapons where they now exist and also to prevent their emergence elsewhere. The United States deeply regrets that a minority of States, including some with the capability for producing these horrid weapons, have not yet signed the Convention. It hopes that they will do so soon and thus join the Secretary-General in the view that this Convention, along with universal adherence to the Biological Weapons Convention, is an indispensable element in global efforts to deal effectively with weapons of mass destruction.

12. The United States, with its long-standing tradition of openness, fully shares the Secretary-General's view that openness and transparency are of crucial importance to the process of building confidence, avoiding misinterpretation of intentions and enhancing the predictability of military behaviour, and also that openness and transparency are of special significance in the regional context. The value of confidence- and security-building measures has been dramatically demonstrated in Europe, although as noted earlier, the specific character of such measures is not automatically transferable from one region to another. The United States welcomes the apparent growing interest among States in the concept of confidence-building

measures, and particularly the actual implementation of such measures in several parts of the world. The United States strongly hopes that the adoption by the Disarmament Commission last year of guidelines for objective information on military matters was indicative of readiness on the part of an increasing number of States to undertake practical steps in this area. It will support appropriate efforts in that direction, including the development of confidence-building measures with specific regional application.

13. On the universal level, the international community has taken a significant step towards greater transparency by establishing the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The United States is gratified that the General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, adopted, without a vote, a resolution endorsing the consensus report of the panel of governmental technical experts whose task was to develop technical procedures for the Register and to examine the modalities for its future expansion. The action by the General Assembly provides the Register with a strong foundation, as urged by the Secretary-General, but the actual effectiveness of the Register and its further development obviously will depend on the extent of participation in it by Member States. The United States appeals to all of them to provide to the Register their first data on arms transfers, as well as available background information on their military holdings, procurement through national production, and relevant policies by the established date of 30 April 1993.

14. As the Secretary-General points out, the new set of problems, such "post-disarmament issues" as conversion, safe storage and disposal of weapons subject to reduction, are very complex and can have significant financial implications. In some instances, those implications may be relatively long-term. At present, these problems directly affect only the limited number of States currently engaged in actual arms reduction. Given some misconceptions in the international community about the immediate scope of economic benefits of disarmament, however, the observations of the Secretary-General are a helpful reminder of realities in this regard.

15. In his report, the Secretary-General also addresses the question of disarmament machinery. On this question, the United States would like to make a number of observations.

16. The United States agrees that the disarmament machinery should meet the realities and priorities of our time. In other words, the machinery should be capable of effectively supporting the objectives identified and agreed upon by the international community. This implies that any reassessment of the United Nations disarmament machinery can be undertaken only in the context of a general appreciation of the current international security environment and its attendant arms control dimensions. While the report of the Secretary-General provides a very useful basis for it, common understanding in this regard has yet to be arrived at.

17. The effectiveness of any organizational machinery depends on how it is used. Unless Member States are determined to utilize the United Nations disarmament machinery in pursuit of realistic objectives, no reassessment of that machinery will help advance progress in disarmament.

18. In short, the United States' view is that a reassessment of the United Nations disarmament machinery would be premature in the absence of a general understanding of the new priorities in the field of disarmament and the most effective way of attaining them. Nevertheless, there are certain steps that could be usefully taken to rationalize and improve the existing machinery even now.

19. The First Committee, which has already moved in the direction of integrating its deliberations on disarmament and international security questions, should take the next step and remove the artificial distinction between its disarmament and international security agendas in terms of both substance and the handling of related resolutions. In the process, the agenda should be consolidated so as to eliminate redundancy. This should result in less time being required for general debate, a reduced number of resolutions and a consequent shortening of the annual sessions of the First Committee.

20. The Disarmament Commission, which is operating under the reform arrangements it adopted in 1991, should have its agenda limited to three items at any time, in order to be able to perform its functions in a deliberate and efficient matter. The utility of the Disarmament Commission should not be measured by the number of items on its agenda but by the substantive value of its product.

21. The Office of Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat has been performing its functions in a most commendable manner, despite the fact that some of its personnel have been detailed elsewhere in the Secretariat. Given the increased workload of that Office resulting from various actions by the General Assembly, in particular the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, its staff should be restored to the full complement that now exists in theory but not in actual fact. Consistent with the emphasis by the Secretary-General on integrating disarmament issues into the broader structure of the international peace and security agenda, this Office should remain, both substantively and in terms of its location, in close touch with other relevant elements of the Secretariat

22. The United States supports the concept of a coordinated system which would allow the international community to address major disarmament issues promptly, flexibly and efficiently. We do not believe, however, that coordination requires the creation of some overall umbrella organization. Rather, as suggested above we should seek better rationalization and greater efficiency of the existing elements of the disarmament machinery. It should also be noted that review of treaties, including bilateral and multilateral arms control and disarmament treaties, is the function of the parties to such treaties and not of an extra-treaty body or organization.

23. As regards the Conference on Disarmament, an autonomous body that emerged from an agreement reached among Member States in 1978, it is currently engaged in a self-generated review, and the status of that review is the subject of a communication from the Conference to the Chairman of the First Committee.

24. In conclusion, the United States would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report and its hope that all other Member States will also find the report to be a most valuable basis for bringing the

approach of the international community to arms control and disarmament into accord with the opportunities and challenges presented by the realities of the post-cold war world.

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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

VENEZUELA

[Original: Spanish]

[11 March 1993]

1. Pursuant to paragraph (b) of decision 47/422, the Government of Venezuela takes pleasure in submitting some preliminary reflections on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

2. Venezuela shares the Secretary-General's view that significant progress has been achieved in a number of important areas of disarmament and that new challenges as well as new opportunities for the pursuit of general and complete disarmament have arisen. These challenges and opportunities are all the more noteworthy because the new international environment enhances the possibilities for international cooperation and requires the international community to continue to attach the greatest importance to questions relating to disarmament. Venezuela therefore agrees that it is necessary to review the methods by which the international community will seek in the immediate future to create the optimum conditions for international peace and security.

3. From this point of view, the Secretary-General's report makes a timely and important contribution to achieving these goals by setting out a series of ideas and initiatives for dealing with disarmament questions in the immediate future and the methodology to be used in discussing them.

4. In Venezuela's opinion, the international community's disarmament efforts should build on the results already achieved and be directed, within a framework of continuity, towards exploring how agreements can be achieved expeditiously on the various issues which are already under consideration, giving emphasis to those which are generally agreed to be the most urgent in the new international environment. The international community should continue its consideration while constantly strengthening the basic machinery available to it for harmonizing positions and formalizing agreements.

5. Venezuela maintains that the adoption of arms limitation and reduction and disarmament measures continues to play an essential role in the strengthening of international peace and security. It considers that the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly - the first special session devoted to disarmament, which was held in 1978 - remains valid (resolution S-10/2). The need to end the arms race, in view of its serious implications for international security, was rightly accepted by all countries, even in the context of the so-called "cold war", as an imperative task requiring special study in order to determine its specific characteristics and those of the questions related to it as well as the appropriate machinery to deal with all aspects of disarmament issues. The results of those efforts proved the usefulness of continuing them. It is worth mentioning, in that connection, the consensus reached on various items within the framework of the Disarmament Commission and, more recently, the successful completion within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament of the Convention on Chemical Weapons.

6. With respect to the scope of the Secretary-General's report and based on the above considerations, Venezuela agrees with the Secretary-General that there are links "between disarmament and arms regulation on the one hand, and the political processes which shape international behaviour on the other". In particular, it agrees that "disarmament, the structuring of the new system of international relations and improving economic conditions" are mutually interdependent processes. Venezuela has maintained, in this context, that there is a close relationship between disarmament and development. The new international environment provides a historic opportunity to promote parallel advances in both these priority areas. In practical terms, the progress made in the area of disarmament could lead to a revision of the Programme of Action, adopted in 1987 at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, in order to strengthen the link between the resources freed by disarmament and those related to social and economic development, taking into account the latest conceptual and programmatic advances in those areas, particularly that of sustained development, concerning which firm commitments and parameters for international action already exist. With regard to the link between disarmament and efforts to maintain and consolidate peace, we consider that the two processes have their own characteristics and specific machinery which cannot be united within a single programmatic framework or approach, even though they tend towards the same goals.

7. As regards the ideas relating to "globalization", Venezuela entirely agrees that disarmament efforts should not be confined to the bilateral sphere in spite of the great importance of that aspect, given the primary responsibility borne by the major military Powers in that area, but should be expanded and consolidated at the multilateral level, as regards both nuclear and conventional disarmament. Venezuela attaches great importance to the multilateral approach to disarmament because it considers that that approach embodies three basic principles: indivisibility, non-discrimination and broad reciprocity, which favour transparency and the universalization of effort. In particular, Venezuela attaches great importance to the efforts being made to establish zones free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction; to the efforts to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space, which item remains on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament and concerning which several proposals have been submitted seeking to fill the gaps in the present regime governing activities in that area; and to achieving as quickly as possible a comprehensive ban on nuclear tests, the sole means by which nuclear weapons proliferation can be prohibited. In that respect, Venezuela agrees that there is "a system of agreements and treaties" which "provide a solid framework for furthering the disarmament and arms control process today" (A/C.1/47/7, para. 20).

8. The progressive approach by which the disarmament process must be completed does not, in practical terms, contradict the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons and of immediate cessation of their qualitative improvement.

9. Venezuela believes it would be advisable to pursue the efforts to put an end to the cycle of development and production of nuclear weapons, including the testing stage, which continues in effect. It is necessary to take advantage of the progress achieved in some areas of disarmament in order to devote greater attention to this subject at the Conference on Disarmament and at the Amendment Conference to convert the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water of 1963 into a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban

treaty, whose efforts are a fundamental aspect of efforts to prevent the continuation of nuclear tests.

10. The existence of nuclear weapons, their possible increased sophistication and the continuing dangers of proliferation make it necessary to strengthen the international regime envisaged in the existing Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), on the basis of reciprocal, non-discriminatory principles and through balanced implementation world wide. If the Treaty is extended indefinitely and unconditionally, as suggested in the report, it may become so out of step with the de facto situation and the above-mentioned trends, that its validity in terms of its aims may be affected. Venezuela believes that extension of the Treaty should be aimed at achieving a compromise that will permit a strengthening of the Treaty and encourage other States to become parties thereto. Until such time as this goal is achieved, nuclear-weapon States must undertake to adopt effective and convincing guarantees aimed at preventing the use or threat of use of such weapons.

11. Venezuela is particularly concerned about the problems stemming from the application of scientific and technological advances to the development of new weapons and more sophisticated weapons systems and their consequent effects on international security, and also about the restrictions imposed on the transfer of dual-use technologies because of the effects they might have on proliferation. Both aspects deserved to be considered at greater length.

12. With regard to the problems relating to the transfer of armaments, Venezuela believes that these are not just regional in scope, although it does not rule out the possibility that they might be tackled at the regional level, provided that the regional bodies concerned are empowered to do so. In any event, it believes that further efforts should be made to identify the problem and to consider ways and means of resolving it without prejudice to legitimate needs for national security and defence and within a context of growing transparency, which is encouraged by the register of conventional weapons.

13. As regards institutional matters, Venezuela wishes to emphasize the importance that the work of the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee are acquiring in this new international context, since they are the organs entrusted with considering disarmament questions, including the interrelationship between those two mechanisms and the Conference on Disarmament. Venezuela considers that it is just as important to strengthen the capacities of the Organization in these spheres, particularly, the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

14. Without prejudice to the aforesaid considerations, Venezuela supports the Secretary-General's suggestion regarding an evaluation of existing United Nations disarmament mechanisms so that they may carry out their responsibilities effectively, bearing in mind the new challenges posed by the events that are taking place in the sphere of disarmament and international security. Venezuela considers the establishment within the framework of the United Nations of mechanisms to consider the problems created by the arms race in all its manifestations, including aspects related thereto, notwithstanding the conditions deriving from the confrontation of the super-Powers, to be one of the major achievements in this sphere. Due to this, the international community has a series of diverse instruments - political and technical - capable of dealing

with disarmament questions, the importance of which is particularly great in view of the unprecedented opportunities now opening for the disarmament process as a result of the international environment.

15. The United Nations system provides for mechanisms having specific characteristics and mandates to consider and negotiate matters relating to arms limitation and disarmament. The First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and, to some extent, the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat are in a position to channel the Organization's efforts to that end, and to safeguard a comprehensive international approach to problems and to encourage solutions consistent with the dimensions of the subject.

16. In Venezuela's view, the First Committee of the General Assembly should continue to play its important role in respect of consideration of arms limitation and disarmament. In this new context, debates in the First Committee should satisfy a twofold objective: continue the review of priorities established in the Final Document of 1978 and contribute to the identification and promotion of broad principles regarding new subjects, thereby preserving its function as principal (guiding) deliberative body of the United Nations in the sphere of disarmament. This does not exclude the desirability of a rationalization that would guarantee adequate discussion of the matters submitted to it for consideration with a view to facilitating the adoption of specific measures in the spheres within its competence.

17. For its part, the United Nations Disarmament Commission should continue playing a fundamental role in this new phase of disarmament, particularly as new questions of importance to the international community arise which require detailed study before the negotiating stage is reached. The universal character of the Commission is therefore an important factor in the conceptual and more detailed discussion of these questions; the Commission could draw up more specific directives and recommendations on these questions as a basis for the subsequent establishment of international standards regulating the activities of States with regard to arms limitation and disarmament. Venezuela considers that the Commission has made constructive progress in this direction.

18. Venezuela stresses the need for the Conference on Disarmament to step up its efforts to find ways of strengthening its role as the sole multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. It is up to the Conference on Disarmament and its members to identify how best to achieve that objective; however, we believe that the Conference would benefit from a slight increase in membership. The Conference should not seek to monitor and supervise a few existing multilateral agreements on disarmament on a permanent basis, since that would detract from its main function as a negotiating body; it should serve, instead, as a mechanism for initiating negotiations as soon as possible in other areas of multilateral disarmament, with a view to securing world agreements on arms limitation and disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament has not made full use of the possibilities available to it in this area.

19. With regard to the supervision and monitoring of multilateral disarmament agreements, it would be preferable for each agreement to have its own monitoring body, as was agreed to in the case of the Convention on Chemical Weapons.

20. Venezuela considers that the best way of securing verification and monitoring systems, and thus of ending the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, is through specific multilateral agreements for each type of weapons open to all States. In our view, the technical characteristics of the disarmament process call for a specific and specialized approach. Transferring responsibility for verification and monitoring to political bodies could be counterproductive and work against the universality needed in order for a disarmament process to operate effectively.

21. Venezuela considers that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses a threat to international peace and security in general and that the best means of averting that threat definitively is to conclude specific multilateral disarmament agreements, which would be monitored and verified by their own specialized bodies, as has been done until now. Venezuela considers that the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations adequately cover situations of specific threats to international peace and security. If the above tasks are to be properly fulfilled, efforts to extend the range of international agreements and monitoring mechanisms available must be stepped up. If the international community wishes to make constructive use of the historic opportunity offered by the end of bipolar confrontation and to replace it with a stable system of international security, that priority task should not be delayed.

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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Report of the Secretary-General

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REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

COSTA RICA

[Original: Spanish]

[19 March 1993]

1. The cold war led the United Nations to establish machinery for the discussion and negotiation of disarmament questions. The First Committee of the General Assembly is the deliberative body in which ideas are exchanged and it is a forum for detailed analysis of specific disarmament questions.

2. For this reason, Costa Rica welcomes the submission of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold war era" (A/C.1/47/7).

3. The report of the Secretary-General concentrates on three main concepts - integration, globalization and revitalization - which the Government of Costa Rica considers useful for achieving the goals of the Organization in the area of disarmament.

4. Costa Rica supports the provisions of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2) concerning the relationship between disarmament and development. It therefore shares the Secretary-General's assessment of the link between the structuring of a new system of international relations and the improvement of economic conditions as necessary measures for international security.

5. With regard to the prohibition of nuclear tests, all nuclear test explosions must stop. To that end, an appeal must be made to States to reaffirm their conviction that a treaty on the permanent prohibition of such testing should be a matter of maximum priority.

6. Aware that this mechanism is an essential step for preventing the qualitative improvement and development of nuclear weapons and their further proliferation, the Government of Costa Rica supports the establishment of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty.

7. As to weapons of mass destruction and the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the Government of Costa Rica stresses the importance played at the regional level by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which has made a major contribution in banning nuclear weapons in Latin America.

8. Costa Rica supports the convening in 1995 of a conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to review the operation of the Treaty and hopes that the conference will decide to extend the Treaty indefinitely.

9. Where globalization is concerned, confidence-building measures and disarmament are closely linked to international security. For this reason, Costa Rica supports the position of the Secretary-General with regard to the possibility of using confidence-building measures in international relations.

10. Costa Rica supports efforts aimed at the limitation and gradual reduction of armed forces and conventional weapons within the framework of progress towards general disarmament.

11. The Government of Costa Rica is in favour of promoting regional disarmament as an initiative which will strengthen security and help to bring about global disarmament. It therefore stresses the importance of efforts by States to achieve regional disarmament in accordance with the concept of security, by reducing to the lowest possible level their arms and armed forces.

12. As regards the concept of revitalization, Costa Rica supports the efforts of the First Committee to control arms transfers, particularly those efforts entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament, whose principal task is to deal with issues relating to the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms and the elaboration of universal and practical means to increase openness and transparency.

13. The Government of Costa Rica is of the view that efforts should be made to ensure the effective functioning of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and considers that it is necessary for Member States to report on their policies, legislation and national administrative procedures in respect of the export and import of arms.